

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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10

ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 W

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O 021155Z MAR 76

FM AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1241

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL ASMARA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

C O N F I D E N T I A L KHARTOUM 0613

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, ET, SU

SUBJECT: CISCO TWO: PLF REQUEST MEETING WITH EMBASSY

1. EMBOFF WAS SUMMONED BY SENIOR SECURITY OFFICIAL MORNING MARCH 2 TO INFORM HIM THAT PLF STILL INTENDED RELEASE TWO AMERICANS IT IS HOLDING, DESPITE ITS UNHAPPINESS ABOUT CONTINUED AMERICAN MILITARY AID TO ETHIOPIA. HOWEVER, THEY WISHED MEET WITH AMERICAN EMBASSY OFFICIAL TO CONVEY TO HIM EXTENT OF THEIR UNHAPPINESS AND WARNING THAT IN FUTURE AMERICANS IN ERITREA WOULD BE TREATED "THE SAME AS ETHIOPIAN SOLIDERS". SECURITY OFFICIAL SAID HE TOLD PLF HE COULD ARRANGE MEETING BUT POINTED OUT THAT EMBASSY WOULD NOT DISCUSS RANSOM OR OTHER CONDITIONS FOR RELEASE OF PRISONERS. SECURITY OFFICIAL SAID HE ALSO POINTED OUT THAT DEMANDING RANSOM FOR THE RELEASE OF THE AMERICANS WOULD DISHONOR THE ETHIOPIAN REVOLUTION. OFFICIAL TOLD EMBOFF THAT HIS DEPUTY WOULD ATTEND MEETING IF EMBASSY AGREED IT SHOULD TAKE PLACE.

2. SPEAKING INFORMALLY, SECURITY OFFICIAL ALSO EXPRESSED WHAT HE TERMED AS SUDANESE DISPLEASURE AT CONTINUED AMERICAN MILITARY AID TO ETHIOPIA, ESPECIALLY SINCE
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AMERICAN-PROVIDED AIRCRAFT HAD BEEN ATTACKING TARGETS

INSIDE SUDAN (SEE KHARTOUM 594 AND 602). HE FELT THAT IF INTRUDING ETHIOPIAN AIRCRAFT HAD BEEN PUBLICLY IDENTIFIED AS AMERICAN-PROVIDED THERE WOULD HAVE BEEN SERIOUSLY ADVERSE REACTION WITHIN SUDAN. OFFICIAL ALSO WONDERED WHETHER AMERICANS IN ERITREA COULD NOT BE BETTER PROTECTED, SO AS TO GUARD AGAINST FUTURE ABDUCTIONS.

3. EMBOFF TOLD OFFICIAL HE WOULD RELAY PLF REQUEST FOR MEETING TO AMBASSADOR.

4. ACTION REQUESTED. IN VIEW OF TIME ELAPSED SINCE LAST EMBASSY CONTACT WITH ERITREANS (75 KHARTOUM 2471), REQUEST NEW INSTRUCTIONS ON MEETING WITH PLF INCLUDING ANY MODIFICATIONS OR ADDITIONS TO THOSE FURNISHED IN 75 STATE 240695. IN PARTICULAR, REQUEST DEPARTMENT PROVIDE EXPLICIT INSTRUCTIONS ON REPLY TO BE GIVEN TO QUESTIONS PLF WILL CERTAINLY ASK RE USG MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO EPMG AND CONTINUED PRESENCE OF OFFICIAL AND UNOFFICIAL AMERICAN PERSONNEL IN ASMARA, BEARING IN MIND THAT REPLY MAY AFFECT SECURITY OF SUCH PERSONNEL AS WELL AS TREATMENT THEY MAY RECEIVE IF TAKEN HOSTAGE. MILITARY DELIVERY DISCUSSED ADDIS 2296 AND KHARTOUM 573 OF COURSE PERTINENT.

5. IN VIEW FACT MARCH 3 LOCAL HOLIDAY, REQUEST REPLY BY NIACT IMMEDIATE. BREWER

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NNN

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